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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/792,186	03/03/2004	Mark Shu	M190.148.101 / P-11480.00	4896
25281	7590	06/04/2007	EXAMINER	
DICKE, BILLIG & CZAJA FIFTH STREET TOWERS 100 SOUTH FIFTH STREET, SUITE 2200 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402			STEWART, ALVIN J	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		3738		
		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
		06/04/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/792,186	SHU ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Alvin J. Stewart	3738	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 March 2007.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-53 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 32-50 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-31 and 51-53 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 21 June 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/16/07; 5/5/06; 3/3/04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: See Attachment.

Election/Restrictions

Claims 32-50 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected group, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on 03/16/07.

Applicant's election with traverse of Group I, Species V in the reply filed on 03/16/07 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the step of pulling the suture is required by both groups. This is not found persuasive because the Examiner still believes that the steps of positioning the heart valve within the patient, the apparatus does not require sewing a suture through the valvular rim and pulling the suture to a second position.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 2, line 1, the word "the suture", the examiner is not clear if the Applicant's representative is referring to the suture band or the suture segment. Clarification is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

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(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-11, 13-31 and 51-53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Purdy et al US Patent 5,562,729.

Purdy et al discloses a suture locking assembly (see Figures 34-37) comprising a rim (202, 204 & 206) defining a first flange (204) and a second flange (204), the rim is configured to extend at least partially around a periphery of the heart valve. A suture band (see rings, see attachment), wherein the suture locking assembly is configured to securely maintain a suture segment (see attachment) that is pulled from a first position to a second position relative the suture locking assembly (see attachment).

Regarding the wherein clause of claim 1, the first position is the position of element 176 before connecting to the flanges 204 of the heart valve. The second position is the lock position shown in Figure 35

Regarding claims 2 and 3, see attachment.

Regarding claim 5, the examiner has interpreted the distal ends of each flange as the plurality of stop sites. The ends of the flanges are capable of impeding suture movement.

Regarding claims 8 and 9, the examiner has not given patentable weight to the functional language "configured to".

Regarding claims 11 and 13, see fig. 34.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

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having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Purdy et al US Patent 5,562,729.

Purdy et al discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Purdy et al does not disclose a homogenous rim formed with a stent.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the manufacturing process of the heart valve by making the device of the same material because Applicant has not disclosed that by having a homogeneous material provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicant's invention to perform equally well with Purdy et al reference because no matter how the implant is made it would perform equally as well.

Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the Purdy et al reference to obtain the invention as specified in claim 1.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin J. Stewart whose telephone number is 571-272-4760. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00AM-5:30PM(1 Friday B-week off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A. Stewart

**ALVIN J. STEWART
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Art Unit 3738**

May 23, 2007.

Attachment

